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Hayden, ID 83835-8355**

January 26, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft  
US Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

The Microsoft antitrust case has dragged through the federal courts for nearly four years now. Last year, a settlement was reached between Microsoft and the Department of Justice, and that settlement is currently pending in the federal courts. Unfortunately, Microsoft's opponents are currently seeking to undermine the settlement and bring additional litigation against the Microsoft Corporation in the federal courts. Further suit would be a waste of time and money, and I think it is in the best interest of the public to finalize the settlement, rather than allow the federal courts to become the playground for personal vendettas to be hashed out.

The settlement is by no means unfair, especially to Microsoft's competitors. In fact, in the interest of wrapping up the case, Microsoft has agreed to terms and conditions that extend to aspects of the corporation that were not found to be in violation of antitrust laws. In other words, the settlement represents generosity on Microsoft's part. Microsoft has agreed to refrain from retaliating against computer makers who introduce software into the market that directly competes with Microsoft technology. Microsoft has also agreed to license the Windows operating system to twenty of the largest computer makers on identical terms, including price.

I do not believe that, with a perfectly reasonable settlement available, further litigation is necessary. Microsoft has paid its debt to society, and it is time to move on. I ask you to support the finalization of the settlement as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

  
Helen Tester

cc: Senator Larry Craig